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SUBJECT: GRENADA WEEKLY ACTIVITY REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 18-24, 2007

¶1. (U) Embassy Grenada's weekly activity report (GWAR) provides a little detail about events of interest that do not merit longer reporting at this time.

¶2. (U) Begin Text:

¶A. Grenada Teachers Up the Ante

The President of the Grenada Union of Teachers (GUT) announced that if there is no pay agreement in place by Wednesday 28, teachers will stay away from schools on Friday 30. The teachers had engaged in "mild protest action" wearing union tee shirts to school, etc., saying the government was not honoring its 2003 promises.

The 2003 promise was made just before the country was devastated - and its infrastructure nearly all wiped out - by Hurricanes Ivan (2004) and Emily (2005). Reconstruction severely strained the country's resources. Grenada received promises of substantial foreign assistance after the hurricanes, but only the United States actually delivered all it promised, which amounted to about 50% of all aid promised. In order to rebuild, the government borrowed heavily. Debt to GDP now stands at 126%. The IMF has warned the GOG to maintain fiscal discipline.

¶B. Chinese Deny They Taking Grenadian Jobs

Grenadian Trade Union Congress objected vociferously on behalf of Grenadian workers that the Chinese who arrived under concessions granted by the government, have remained in violation of their visas and are taking work from locals. The reality is far murkier, as the government has not responded except to declare that the Chinese are not taking jobs from Grenadians.

According to The Grenadian Voice, the Chinese company (underwritten by the Chinese government) which was involved with the building of the stadium said that they are not involved with private construction and are not depriving Grenadians of jobs. PM Mitchell dismissed as false claims by local union representatives that Chinese workers were hired to construct a resort in Grenada. The Chinese said that only fifty of the six hundred workers who came to build the stadium still remain on the island.

¶C. Grenada Strengthens Bonds With South Korea

Korea established ties with Grenada in 1974 with the Korean Ambassador resident in Caracas. Korea recently appointed Attorney and Magistrate Jerry Seales as their Honorary Consul in Grenada. The Korean Ambassador on November 19 presented Seales with his letter of Commission. Plans are afoot for Grenada to attend the world trade exposition in South Korea in 2012.

¶D. Seeking Another Regional Air Carrier

The newspapers this weekend quoted the Minister for Tourism, Clarice Modeste-Curwen as saying that the Government of Grenada has started talks with a private carrier to fly between the islands to boost regional travel. The Minister believes that since LIAT has once again become the sole regional carrier, it

has become too expensive for travelers, undercutting inter-CARICOM tourism. No word as to whether other CARICOM countries are supporting her efforts.

End Text.

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